

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims, in which deleted matter is either struck-through or enclosed in double brackets, and added material (except for newly presented claims) is underlined, replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in this application.

Claims 1-12. Canceled.

13. (Currently Amended) A blasting arrangement which includes (a) a plurality of detonators, (b) a blast control unit which is directly connected to the plurality of detonators and which ~~[[is]]~~ contains a first energy source, the blast control unit being physically incapable of directly providing a voltage at a level which is suitable for arming the detonators, and (c) a blast key which is removably connected to the blast control unit and which includes a blast energy generator and optionally contains an on-board energy source,

wherein, when the blast key is connected to the blast control unit, the blast energy generator is operable to produce a voltage at a level which is suitable for arming the detonators (i) by using energy selected from the first energy source in the blast control unit and (ii), when the on-board energy source is present, by using energy selected from one or both of [[a]] the first energy source in the blast key and a source in the blast control unit and the on-board energy source in the blast key.

14. (Previously Presented) A blasting arrangement which includes a plurality of detonators, a blast control unit which is directly connected to the plurality of detonators and which is physically incapable of directly providing a voltage at a level which is suitable for arming the detonators, and a blast key which is removably connected to the blast control unit and which includes a blast energy generator and a switch which controls operation of the blast energy generator, wherein, when the blast key is connected to the blast control unit, the blast energy generator is operable to produce a voltage at a level which is suitable for arming the detonators using energy selected from one or both of a source in the blast key and a source in the blast control unit.

15. (Previously Presented) A blasting arrangement according to claim 14 wherein the switch is selected from a manual switch, an electronic switch and an electromechanical switch.

16. (Previously Presented) A blasting arrangement according to claim 14 which includes a control logic unit for controlling operation of the switch.

17. (Previously Presented) A blasting arrangement according to claim 16 wherein the control logic unit is responsive to at least one external control device.

18. (Previously Presented) A blasting arrangement according to claim 17 wherein the external control device is selected from manually operable input devices and communication links which are connected to the control logic unit.

19. (Previously Presented) A blasting arrangement according to claim 18 wherein the blast key includes a body and the manually operable input devices are mounted to the body.

20. (Currently Amended) A blasting arrangement according to ~~claim 13 or~~ claim 14 wherein the energy for producing the voltage at a level which is suitable for arming the detonators is provided solely from ~~[[a]]~~ an on-board source in the blast key.

21. (Currently Amended) A blasting arrangement according to ~~claim 13 or~~ claim 14 wherein the blast key comprises a housing within which the blast energy generator and, optionally, an on-board energy source, are enclosed.

22. (Previously Presented) A blasting arrangement according to claim 13 further comprising a control logic unit which is responsive to at least one external control device to have the blast energy generator produce the voltage at a level which is suitable for arming the detonators.

23. (Previously Presented) A blasting arrangement according to claim 22 wherein the external control device is selected from manually operable input devices and communication links which are connected to the control logic unit.

24. (Previously Presented) A blasting arrangement according to claim 23 wherein the blast key includes a body and the manually operable input devices are mounted to the body.

25. (New) A blasting arrangement according to claim 13 wherein the energy for producing the voltage at a level which is suitable for arming the detonators is provided solely from the on-board source in the blast key.